

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently amended) A method for a sponsor to motivate a user based on a rewards program, the sponsor and user communicating over a communications medium, the method comprising:

awarding points to the user in response to a behavior by the user, the behavior being learning about the sponsor, the behavior excluding a purchase of goods or services by the user, wherein the sponsor comprises a merchant; and

redeeming the points of the user in exchange for rewards, the points being exclusively redeemable through the sponsor.

2. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein the communications medium includes the Internet.

3. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein the communications medium includes a private network.

4. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein the communications medium includes a telephone system.

5. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein the communications medium includes wireless communications.

6. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein the behavior comprises supplying user information.

7. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein the behavior comprises the user's clicking on a web page provided by the sponsor.

8. (Original) The method according to claim 1, further comprising: awarding points as a factor of the frequency of consumer communications with the sponsor.
9. (Original) The method according to claim 1, further comprising: maintaining information based on communications with multiple users.
10. (Original) The method according to claim 9, further comprising: analyzing the information.
11. (Original) The method according to claim 1, further comprising: maintaining information based on multiple communications with one user.
12. (Original) The method according to claim 11, further comprising: analyzing the information.
13. (Original) The method according to claim 1, further comprising: sending an email to the user based on information obtained from the user.
14. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein the redeeming step further comprises redeeming points for goods or services.
15. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein the redeeming step further comprises redeeming points for entry in a sweepstakes.
16. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein the rewards comprise goods or services supplied, in part or in whole, in barter.
17. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein the sponsor is a merchant further comprises a school, an employer, a doctor and a recruiter.

18. (Currently amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein the sponsor engages the services of a program manager as an agent of ~~a merchant~~ the sponsor.

19. (Currently amended) A system for implementing a rewards-based program, the system comprising:

a communications medium;

at least one user computer used by a user; and

at least one rewards program server, the at least one rewards program server programmed to award points to the user in response to a behavior by the user, the behavior being learning about a sponsor, the behavior excluding a purchase of goods or services by the user, the rewards program server further programmed to redeem the points of the user in exchange for rewards, the points being exclusively redeemable through the sponsor, wherein the sponsor comprises a merchant, a school, an employer, a doctor and a recruiter.

20. (Currently amended) The system as recited in claim 19, wherein the at least one rewards program server hosts a plurality of rewards-based programs for a plurality of sponsors,